



Haberdashers' **ADAMS**

GCSE choices for
September 2025

January 2025

Dear Year 9 Students,

Next year you move into Key Stage 4 and begin a two-year course leading to GCSE. In Key Stage 4 there are core subjects (English Language, English Literature, mathematics, biology, chemistry and physics) which are compulsory. There are also non-core subjects where you have some choices as described in the following pages.

This guide has been written to help you to make a sensible choice by describing the subjects you may choose, by prompting you to take into account the right factors and ask the right questions.

- It is important that you choose a curriculum you are likely to enjoy and that you take into account the possible impact these choices may have upon your future career.
- To help you make the right choices, it is important that you speak to your parents, subject teachers, form tutor and careers advisers.

If, after reading this guide and discussing your plans with your parents and teachers, you are still uncertain, you can always talk further with any of the school's senior staff. We promise to give you an objective assessment of your ideas and to point you in the right direction.

GCSEs are important to your future. They are more difficult, studied at a higher level and in more depth than Key Stage 3 subjects. To gain entry to the most selective universities your target must be to gain grade 8 or 9 in as many subjects as possible and grade 7 should be seen as the minimum acceptable. Therefore, it is important that you choose the right subjects and that you are happy, well-motivated and hard working from the outset. Success will only come from two years' hard work.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "G J Hickey". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized 'G' and 'H'.

G J Hickey
HEADMASTER

HABERDASHERS' ADAMS

CHOICE OF GCSE SUBJECTS

In your first three years in the school, you were not given any choice of subjects.

In Years 10 and 11 you will take **ten** subjects in preparation for your GCSE examinations. The time has now come for you to choose some of these subjects. They will be:

Compulsory	1	English Language
	2	English Literature
	3	Mathematics
	4	Biology
	5	Chemistry
	6	Physics
Options	7	A modern language: French or German
	8	A humanity: geography, history, or religious studies
	9	A performance subject: art, drama, music or physical education
	10	A free choice from the list below

If you wish, the free choice option can include a second modern language or a second humanity. For example, you could pick French as your modern language option and German as your free option; and you could pick geography as your humanities option and history or religious studies as your free option.

The list you can choose your free option from is:

- | | |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Business Studies | 5. Geography |
| 2. Computer Science | 6. German |
| 3. Design Technology | 7. History |
| 4. French | 8. Religious Studies |

In making your choices, you should think about:

- (a) Are you really interested in the subject?
- (b) Will you be successful in the subject?
- (c) Are you likely to need a subject as a qualification when you enter the Sixth Form or leave school?
- (d) Are you “keeping your options open” by picking a good range of different types of subjects?

HOW TO SUBMIT YOUR OPTIONS

You will select the subjects you wish to choose on an on-line platform provided by school.

The deadline for submitting your options is **1:45pm on Tuesday 25th February 2025**.

We will look at what everyone has asked for and check whether any subjects are either over-subscribed or not popular enough to run at all. If you select an option which we cannot give you for one of these reasons, you will be given an opportunity to make a second choice.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

After the deadline for options choices, we will let you know which options we can give you. We normally send out this information in March. If you are not happy with your options or you change your mind about your choices, you can ask for changes but we cannot make any promises about whether we can satisfy your requests. **In any case, all discussion about options choices has to be completed during the summer term – you cannot change your subject choices in the summer holidays or after the start of Year 10.**

GCSE ART

NATURE OF THE SUBJECT

GCSE Art & Design will involve the development of a range of skills over the first year, which will allow students to develop an individual course work project in year 11. It is this work which is assessed to achieve the course work mark (60% of the overall mark available).

During year 10 students can expect to cover the following skills and activities:-

Observational drawing
Painting
Printmaking
Collage
Image manipulation (practical and ICT based)
Photography
Mixed Media
Project development and experimentation

THE EXAM

The GCSE Art exam will be taken by Year 11 in the second half of the year. The exam paper is given to students at the start of January and a preparation period (8 to 10 weeks) is allowed before the commencement of a ten-hour examination. The pupils must complete a 'finished' piece in this time, as well as handing in the development and preparation work. The grade is gained for this work as a whole.

COURSEWORK

In terms of course requirements, a willingness to work and a genuine engagement with Art & Design is necessary. To reach the higher grades however, a good level of drawing ability is essential and this element of Art & Design is emphasised in all work.

Along with the practical work, boys will be expected to become aware of theoretical aspects of Art & Design through image analysis and self-assessment.

Boys opting for Art & Design should note that a serious commitment to the subject is called for and good Art comes from hard-work and self-discipline. 60% of the final grade is based on coursework, which commences at the start of Year 10 and is completed by January of Year 11. It should be noted that the level of attainment necessary to gain grades 7-9 is extremely high and is only gained through the strongest commitment to the subject.

RELEVANCE

During the course the students will cover a range of key skills, ranging from general observation to analysis and interpretation as well as imagination and self-expression. It will include the use of computers as an aid to design and requires a good deal of motivation and discipline.

Students who continue with Art & Design post-16 may consider various options for study beyond AS-level. Most recently this has included fine art, sculpture, architectural design and design engineering.

GCSE BUSINESS

NATURE OF THE SUBJECT

Business Studies concerns the business aspects of organisations with their economic, political and social contexts. The skills acquired from the study of business studies would be invaluable, whether one decides to set up their own business or work for any type of business organisation. The course delves into business structure; looking closely at the four business functions; namely marketing, finance, production and people in business in addition to the external environment that influence business behaviour.

Students will develop the skills that will allow them to apply their knowledge of how businesses operate to a variety of current business situations. Students will also learn to analyse given situations using real-life business case studies to help them organise their thinking into a clear, structured and logical format with which to address any particular issue. Students will also play the role of the business consultant in evaluating a particular business issue and suggest suitable courses of action for companies and their internal departments. Students would also be able to interpret business data and propose course of further action.

THE SYLLABUS

Exam board:	OCR
Course Name:	GCSE Business (9-1)
Course Code:	J204
Course Content:	The subject is split into two units that encompass the four business functions. These areas are: Business 1 which looks into business activity, marketing and people management. Business 2 covers the operations management, finance and the external influences on a business.

THE EXAMINATION

The GCSE (9–1) in Business is a linear qualification with 100% external assessment. OCR's GCSE (9–1) in Business consists of two examined components that are externally assessed.

Each component carries an equal weighting of 50% of the GCSE (9–1) qualification. Each examination has a duration of 1 hour and 30 minutes.

Each unit is worth 80 marks and split into two sections. The Section A for each component contains multiple choice questions worth 15 marks. The Section B includes short, medium and extended response style questions which use stimulus material that draws on real business contexts. This section of the component is worth 65 marks. Synoptic questions are included in section B.

COURSEWORK

There is no controlled assessment or coursework for this specification

RELEVANCE

In today's society, the increasing number of jobs going to those in the tertiary sector is vastly increasing, and is dominated by the areas covered in Business Studies. As a department, we pride ourselves for developing employable/soft skills that prepare our pupils for the next stage in life. We help our pupils to develop their communication and personal skills, help them to develop basic IT skills such as the use of excel for simple calculations and the ability to write their own CV.

GCSE COMPUTER SCIENCE

NATURE OF THE SUBJECT

The course is aimed at all those with a keen interest in Computing and the use of computers in all aspects of today's technological world. It should be noted that although there is a large element of practical work involved there is also a substantial amount of theory work to be undertaken.

Computer Science has an immense impact on modern life and it is computer scientists who create the systems we rely on for work, education and entertainment. The job prospects are excellent and the field is rigorous, intellectually vibrant, and multi-faceted.

THE SPECIFICATION

The school follows the OCR Computer Science Specification J277.

Aims of the course

- to develop an understanding of current and emerging technologies, understand how they work and be able to apply this knowledge and understanding in a range of contexts
- to think creatively, innovatively, analytically, logically and critically
- to understand and apply the fundamental principles and concepts of Computer Science, including abstraction, decomposition, logic, algorithms and data representation
- to develop computer programs to solve problems
- to understand the components that make up digital systems, and how they communicate with one another and with other systems
- to understand the impacts of digital technology to the individual and to wider society

SPECIFICATION CONTENT

This course will cover the following aspects:

- Fundamentals of computer systems and their architecture
- Computing hardware and software
- Representation of data in computer systems
- Computer communications and networking
- Databases
- Ethical, legal, cultural and environmental concerns related to computer systems
- Programming and algorithms

ASSESSMENT

Unit 1: Computer systems

- Written Paper
- 1.5 hours
- 50% of qualification
- Includes a mixture of short and long answer questions, covering topics outlined above

Unit 2: Computational thinking, algorithms and programming

- Written Paper
- 1.5 hours
- 50% of qualification
- Includes a mixture of short and long answer questions, covering topics such as algorithms and programming techniques

This course will allow a natural progression to the A Level course offered at Sixth Form Level in the school.

GCSE DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

NATURE OF THE SUBJECT

This is a practical and technical based subject with a high element of problem solving. Practical skills and theory will be taught via a range of 'Design and Make' projects in both 2D *and* 3D. The coursework project provides candidates with the opportunity to demonstrate their ability to integrate designing skills, making skills and technical knowledge to produce outcomes of high quality, which satisfy a specific need or function within one of three contexts, set by AQA. Opportunities to develop skills in using a wide range of materials and processes, Computer Aided Design and Manufacture (CAD/CAM), presentation skills (e-portfolio), sketch modelling and prototyping can be used to complement major projects.

THE SPECIFICATION

Specification: AQA - Design and Technology 8552
Non-examined assessment 50%: Design and make project approximately (30-35 hours)
Written Paper 50%: Written paper (2 hours)

DESIGN

Iterative Design Process
Research and analysis
Ergonomics and Anthropometrics
Product analysis
Development of presentation skills
Aesthetic Considerations
Product Development
CAD
Material Selection
Communication Techniques
Planning
Manufacturing Issues
Evaluation through Design

MAKING

Manufacturing Techniques
Use of tools and machines
Manufacturing Processes
CAM
Quality Control and Assurance
Environmental Concerns
Testing Procedures
Industrial Production Methods
Modification
Product Evaluation
Material Characteristics
Production Methods
Safety Awareness

RELEVANCE OF GCSE

The course will suit anyone with good practical, graphic or scientific skills. Design skills taught in Year 9 will be enhanced and should preferably be to a high standard. Pupils will design and make products, which include activities related to industrial practices and CAD/CAM, throughout a series of small projects in Year 10, leading to a major project in Year 11. The subject will enhance design and practical skills and creates a good foundation to continue into study of Design in the Sixth Form.

THE EXAMINATION

Written Examination - 50% of marks awarded. One examination paper of two hours duration.

- **Core technical principles:** A mixture of multiple choice and short answer questions assessing a breadth of technical knowledge and understanding.
- **Specialist technical principles:** Several short answer questions (2–5 marks) and one extended response to assess a more in depth knowledge of technical principles.
- **Designing and making principles:** A mixture of short answer and extended response questions.

THE NON-EXAM ASSESSMENT (NEA / COURSEWORK)

Coursework is worth 50% of the total marks awarded. The project is chosen from a range of three contexts released by the examination board on 1st June in Year 10. The pupil identifies a project in collaboration with a client and with the assistance of the subject tutor. With short-term deadlines agreed in advance, pupils will work on the project throughout Year 11 and submit an e-portfolio with a supporting model by March of the examination year.

RELEVANCE BEYOND GCSE

The course will allow natural progression into Product Design in the Sixth Form allowing pupils to continue their specialism and consider design or engineering related degrees or degree-level apprenticeships, with the building of a portfolio of relevant work.

GCSE DRAMA

NATURE OF THE SUBJECT

The GCSE drama curriculum has a significant emphasis upon pupils creating, developing and performing to an audience. Inevitably, it is essential that pupils are good communicators and can collaborate productively with their peers. They also need to be able to evaluate the strengths and areas for development of their own and others' work. Pupils will be expected to employ theatrical skills in their work to achieve specific goals. They will also be expected to study the work and approaches of significant dramatists. This will involve reviewing and analysing live professional performances. Additionally, pupils will analyse the role of a theatre designer in exploring staging, special effects and costume.

GCSE COURSE

Pupils will work as part of a small group in order to devise, script, rehearse and perform their own piece of drama. They will keep a portfolio monitoring their own work so that they can review their progress after the final performance. They will also rehearse and stage two short scenes from a contemporary drama text which will also be performed to an audience. Pupils will study the text, 'Blood Brothers.' They will be expected to analyse this play as a director, performer and designer through a series of questions. In addition to this, pupils will be expected to watch a number of professional performances to improve their own understanding of the key techniques in drama.

ASSESSMENT

We will be following the AQA GCSE Drama course. 40% of the course will be completed by the end of Year 10; this will be the Devising component. 30% of this is accounted for through coursework. Students will work in groups to create their own performances inspired by stimuli. This component includes live performance and the quality of pupils' self-evaluation in a written format. Performances will be watched by a live audience; they will also be recorded and then sent for moderation by the exam board.

Pupils will sit a single examination in Year 11 where they will answer questions on their set text (Blood Brothers) and evaluate a live performance. The examination will last 1 hour, 45 minutes and accounts for 40% of the overall marks.

The other 20% is accounted for through live performance of 2 extracts whereby an external examiner visits and marks the students on their use of acting skills.

RELEVANCE

This qualification will benefit pupils in their ability to communicate confidently and work with others. These skills are essential for the world of work and in enabling pupils to deliver superb interviews and presentations; they will also become assured negotiators and team players. The course also compliments a number of skills pupils will learn through their GCSE English Literature course, especially in terms of studying drama texts.

Some pupils may use the course to improve their performances in school drama productions and some may wish to pursue a career in a related subject. However, for other pupils, it may simply be the case that they have enjoyed studying Drama in Year 9 and wish to explore the subject further. Having run the course for several years now, it has been incredible to observe how much self-confidence pupils gain as a result of taking this dynamic qualification.

GCSE FRENCH

NATURE OF THE SUBJECT

In the global society in which we now live, all pupils should study modern foreign languages in order to enhance their future career prospects. An appreciation of the language and culture of the wider world is regarded as of paramount importance in all spheres of work. Especially now that the UK has left the EU, language skills will be highly desired and welcomed by employers.

The French GCSE course tests four main skills: listening, reading, speaking and writing. It is also suitable for students who wish to communicate in a foreign language in both written and spoken format for social or work related reasons. They should have a good grasp of Key Stage 3 grammar, particularly tenses and word order.

SYLLABUS

The examinations are conducted through the Edexcel exam board. The emphasis is on communicating in French although a grasp of basic grammar is important. Topics vary from holidays to food and drink, from travel to entertainment.

EXAMINATION

- 1. Listening (25% of the exam):** there is five minutes of reading time at the start. A range of question types in French or English is used to test the articles on the tape. These may include true/false, gap filling or multiple choices. All responses are either in French or English.
- 2. Speaking (25% of the exam):** this consists of a role-play (2 minutes), a photo card (3 minutes) and a general conversation (5-7 minutes).
- 3. Reading (25% of the exam):** this test consists of short items from instructions, notices etc. together with longer items from magazines, newspapers etc. Comprehension will be tested by a range of question types, requiring responses in French and in English. These will include a 50 words translation type exercise from French into English.
- 4. Writing (25% of the exam):** this will consist of 3 writing tasks. They will be testing effective communication in writing for a variety of purposes. This will include an 80-90 word structured writing task, a 130-150 word open-ended writing task and a 50 words translation type exercise from French into English.

Dictionaries are **not** allowed in the exams.

COURSE BOOK

Active Learn (Studio Edexcel GCSE) is the digital book used in Years 9, 10 and 11. This online resource provides additional material complemented by other worksheets for problem solving and group work.

VOCABULARY

In Year 10/11, students can subscribe to an online resource which is based on the GCSE syllabus word lists.

FOREIGN VISITS

It may be possible in Year 10 to take part in a trip to Paris or a French Exchange which would involve our students staying with French families to maximise the use of French and deepen their understanding of French culture and traditions.

STUDYING AT POST-16

The four key language skills continue to form the basis for study at A-level and a greater emphasis is put upon using French in the classroom. The same skills are tested at GCSE; speaking skills carrying the greatest weighing.

The importance of languages in the workplace is reflected in the increasing range of combined courses offered by Universities such as French and Law/Accountancy/IT/Engineering. In view of this trend, students are given the opportunity to carry out work experience in France in the Lower Sixth and Upper Sixth.

GCSE GEOGRAPHY

NATURE OF THE SUBJECT

Geography is a foundation subject in the National Curriculum at Key Stage 3. Students will have gained an understanding of geographical skills, knowledge and understanding of places, physical geography, human geography and environmental geography.

SPECIFICATION

Year 10 students will follow the GCSE Specification, OCR GCSE Geography B.

The current specification has been designed to provide a balance of theoretical and practical work which will encourage an active involvement in the subject. Students will develop an understanding of global geographical issues and learn how to apply them to a range of contexts. Subject specific skills are developed such as map reading but also including new technologies, such as GIS, and enquiry and analysis through fieldwork and research.

Unit 01 Our Natural World (35%)

Four key themes will be assessed in this unit: Global Hazards, Changing Climate, Distinctive Landscapes and Sustaining Ecosystems. Fieldwork and geographical skills will also be assessed in this paper.

Unit 02 People and Society (35%)

Four key themes will be assessed in this unit: Urban Futures, Dynamic Development, UK in the 21st Century and Resource Reliance. Fieldwork and geographical skills will also be assessed in this paper.

Unit 03 Geographical Exploration (30%)

All of the key themes will be assessed through a decision making exercise. Geographical skills will also be assessed in this paper.

RELEVANCE

The course explores up-to-date ideas as to what constitutes geography and what is relevant to today's understanding of the world around us. A good pass grade is useful to progression onto A level, which itself provides a foundation for degree level study. A level Geography, with appropriate supporting subjects, provides a good basis for a variety of careers, such as banking and finance, geology, international aid/development worker, market researcher, political risk analyst, sustainability consultant, GIS manager, water consultancy, town and country planning, travel and tourism, teaching, the civil service and HM forces.

Geography has a broad subject content and a variety of transferable skills which provide an excellent combination with Arts and Humanities subjects, such as Business Studies, History and Religious Studies. In addition, it also combines well with Maths, Biology and other Science subjects.

"Geography is the must-have A-Level" *The Guardian*, 13/08/2015.

GCSE GERMAN

NATURE OF THE SUBJECT

The German GCSE can actually be viewed as a five-year course which starts in Year 7. Hence, pupils already have 60% of the foundation skills needed for higher success at GCSE level. In Key Stage 4, the course content is enriched with more mature material focusing on German-speaking people, countries, and cultures, making the subject engaging, varied and highly relevant to young people.

RELEVANCE:

Germany lies at the heart of Europe, both physically and politically and its continuing economic strength makes German an extremely useful tool in your kit for the future! Studies regularly identify significantly increased earnings over a lifetime if you have German skills and employers regularly identify German as a language they value. As the world's third-largest exporter after China and the U.S., Germany ranks sixth in the world for patent applications, is the second most common language on the internet and is a world leader in 'green' technologies. A German GCSE demonstrates skills in public speaking, problem-solving, cultural agility, adaptability, attention to detail, resilience, risk-taking and empathy; all valuable skills to show a future course-provider or employer. Now that the UK has left the EU, German language skills are very likely to be in short supply and high demand!

SYLLABUS

The AQA syllabus consists of three main themes which offer much scope for debate and discussion:

Theme 1: Identity and Culture This popular topic focuses on

- relationships with family and friends; marriage and partnerships
- social media; mobile technology
- music; cinema and TV; food and eating out; sport and fitness; customs and festivals.

Theme 2: Local, national, international and global areas of interest Another highly relevant topic area which includes discussion of

- home town, neighbourhood and region
- charity/voluntary work; healthy/unhealthy living
- the environment, poverty and homelessness; travel and tourism.

Theme 3: Current and future study and employment This unit 'dovetails' perfectly with pupils' aspirations at Key stage 4 and centres on

- Jobs, career choices and ambitions
- education post-16; life at school/college

AQA EXAMINATION:

1. **Listening (25%):** a range of question types are used to test the comprehension of spoken German.
2. **Speaking (25%):** a role-play (2 mins), a photo card (3 mins) and a conversation (5-7 mins).
3. **Reading (25%):** a variety of comprehension texts, as well as a translation from German into English.
4. **Writing (25%):** a 90-word and 150-word writing task and a short translation from English into German.

TEACHING RESOURCES

We continue with the 'Stimmt!' course at GCSE level and transition from KS3 to KS4 is therefore seamless, with students already being familiar with the essential foundation skills required for success. Students will have a textbook and access to the interactive ActiveLearn resources which fully support and enhance the content of the course. We also encourage our students to subscribe to an online vocabulary learning site in order to further consolidate their understanding. Our KS4 students enjoy weekly conversation practice sessions with our German Assistant, which enable them to further refine their communication skills.

FOREIGN VISITS

A trip to the Christmas markets in Cologne is offered to German students in year 10 and 11.

GCSE HISTORY

NATURE OF THE SUBJECT

Studying history offers an unrivalled perspective on the world around you since it provides the chance to study events that have shaped the world. You will learn the skills needed to develop a critical understanding of how, and why, these events happened. In the process you will develop your writing skills as you analyse sources, construct logical arguments, and substantiate those arguments with evidence. The focus is on making lessons interesting and stimulating.

THE SYLLABUS

The core content of AQA Modern World History (8145) covers the following:

Russia, 1894–1945: Tsardom and communism

This period study focuses on the development of Russia during a turbulent half century of change - a period of autocracy and communism. This involves studying why the Tsarist system collapsed as well as examining the key features of communist rule. The methods Stalin used to stay in power, combining fear with a cult of personality, is perhaps the most interesting aspect of this course.

Conflict and tension in Asia, 1950–1975

This wider world depth study covers the complex nature of the wars in Asia between 1950 and 1975, specifically the Korean War and the Vietnam War. Students will question why the USA became involved in both wars and the consequences of its participation in these conflicts.

Britain: Power and the people: c1170 to the present day

This covers the relationship between the citizen and the state in Britain over a long period of time. It considers the causes, scale, nature and consequences of protest in that relationship; it charts the journey from feudalism and serfdom to democracy and equality. From King John to the execution of Charles I, as well as the Suffragettes and the impact of immigration, this topic is full of change.

Elizabethan England, c1568–1603 (+ Historical environment enquiry)

This option allows students to study in depth a specified period, the last 35 years of Elizabeth I's reign. The study will focus on major events of Elizabeth I's reign considered from economic, religious, political, social and cultural standpoints, as well as contemporary and historical controversies. Students will look at her court, her claim of marriage to her country and why a life full of paranoia and murder meant she could not trust anybody around her.

The historical environment enquiry allows students to study an environment of Elizabeth's time and to consider how and why these areas/buildings are of historical importance e.g. the Globe Theatre.

THE EXAMINATION

Paper 1: Understanding the Modern World (1hr 45 minutes, 84 marks, 50% of GCSE)

In this exam you will answer both source and short answer essay questions on Russia & wars in Asia.

Paper 2: Shaping the nation (1hr 45 minutes, 84 marks, 50% of GCSE)

This exam is 8 questions long and has 4 questions on both British topics. This exam also contains the historical environment enquiry.

RELEVANCE

History is on the list of Russell Group "Facilitating Subjects", which means a good A-level in history, or a history degree, opens the door to a number of careers – including law, planning and management (especially business and personnel management) for which the understanding of human problems and human motivation developed by historical study is particularly relevant.

History is an important part of a balanced, liberal education. A good GCSE grade shows an ability to respond to original material and to frame relevant arguments – qualities valued by higher education institutions and employers. It also constitutes a firm basis for the study of history at 'A' level.

GCSE MUSIC

Is this the right subject for me?

If you enjoy:

- composing and performing music
- learning an instrument or singing
- creating music on computers or in a recording studio
- learning about all types of music, including classical, popular and world then our GCSE Music is the ideal subject for you.

What do I need to know, or be able to do, before taking this course?

You have already gained many of the basic skills needed for this course in your music lessons over the last three years at this school.

- You have been introduced to **creating music of your own** in class and this is developed on the GCSE course as you choose two topics for composition. For example, this could be a popular song and a dance track, a classical piece or some world music. There is a wide choice and it can be tailored to your own musical interests and strengths.
- You have already **listened to a variety of music** in class and these skills are developed as you study some set pieces taken from the classical, 20th century, popular and world music Areas of Study.
- You enjoy **making music**, either as a soloist or in a group. The GCSE course encourages you to perform music of your own choosing and in any style, as a soloist and also in a group. To take this course, you must be able to offer at least one instrument/or voice.

What will I learn?

You will learn how:

- to improve your performing skills
- music is constructed from initial ideas through to the finished product
- to analyse music in a variety of styles and discover the social and historical context in which music has been composed over the last 400 years or so.

How will I be assessed?

Performing	Composing	Listening & Appraising (terminal exam)
You will need to play one solo piece and one ensemble piece.	You will need to create two compositions.	You will sit a 90 minute written paper with questions on your prescribed set works. Questions such as these are asked: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 'Name the instrument playing the solo'• 'Give two musical reasons why you like or dislike this piece of music.'• 'This theme is shared between two instrumental families? What are they?'

Next steps!

If you want to find out more about this GCSE Music course then you can visit the exam board's website at <https://www.eduqas.co.uk/qualifications/music/gcse/>. You should also talk to Dr Upton who will be able to describe the course in detail and advise you of what you need to do next when it comes to your options.

GCSE PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Introduction

Following GCSE PE will provide an exciting opportunity to begin to gain an understanding of PE and will encourage students to immerse themselves in the world of sports and PE. It will open students' eyes to the amazing world of sports performance. Not only will they have the chance to perform in three different sports through the non-exam assessment component, they will also develop wide-ranging knowledge into the how and why of physical activity and sport.

The combination of the physical performance and academic challenge provides an exciting opportunity for students. They can perform, and then through the academic study learn how to improve their performance through application of the theory. Physical Education is learned about through a range of different contexts and the impact it has on both ours and others' everyday lives. Students will learn the reasons why we do things, why some people outperform others – mentally and physically. They will also delve into the ethical considerations behind the use of drugs and gain an understanding of the consequences of inactivity and poor diet.

Students will have the opportunity to develop a wide-ranging set of key skills, including communication using appropriate language, dealing with pressure, split-second decision making, interpreting and analysing data, as well as analysing and evaluating performance so improvements can be made.

Content overview for OCR GCSE Physical Education (J587)

Component 1: Physiological factors affecting performance (written exam, 30% of total GCSE) - this introduces and explores physical factors which underpin physical activities and sports. Students will start to explore the way in which the parts of the human body work and function during physical activity and physiological adaptations that can occur due to diet and training. They will also develop their knowledge and understanding of the principles of training, why we train in different ways and how training plans can be made to optimise results. The study of these topics will aid learners in the development of both their own practical performance and that of others.

Component 2: Socio-cultural issues and sports psychology (written exam, 30% of the total GCSE) - students develop their knowledge and understanding of sports psychology theories related to acquiring movement skills and optimising performance. They will be able to reflect on their own learning and performance of physical activities and sports skills to recognise the key psychological concepts affecting performance. Students also will develop their knowledge of socio-cultural influences that impact on participation and performance in physical activities and sports; they will develop their knowledge and understanding of how sport impacts on society. Engagement patterns of different social groups will be understood by the students, along with strategies to promote participation with practical examples. The commercialisation of physical activities and sports will be understood, including the influences of sponsorship and the media.

In addition, students will develop their knowledge and understanding of ethical and socio-cultural issues in physical activities and sports. They will learn about the benefits of participating in physical activities and sports to their health, fitness and wellbeing. The physical, emotional and social aspects will be understood as well as the consequences of a sedentary lifestyle. Students will also develop their knowledge and understanding of energy use along with diet, nutrition and hydration.

Component 3: Performance in physical education (internally assessed and externally moderated, 40% of the total GCSE) – this involves being assessed in three physical activities and analysing and evaluating a performance.

This qualification is suitable for learners intending to pursue AS or A-levels, higher education or any career for which an understanding of the human body or human behaviour is desirable such as psychology, sociology and biology.

GCSE RELIGIOUS STUDIES

THE NATURE OF THE SUBJECT AND ITS RELEVANCE

GCSE Religious Studies – academically rigorous and personally inspiring.

The GCSE RS course provides students with the opportunity to explore a number of important questions which reach the very heart of life. Students will learn how religion, philosophy and ethics form the basis of our culture and develop valuable skills that will help to prepare them for further study. Throughout the course they will develop an understanding of a range of religious beliefs and practices, considering the impact which religion has on contemporary society. We hope that the course will enable them to develop an informed and balanced view of the role which religion plays in current affairs and encourage them to reflect on their own beliefs and ideas. Students will have plenty of opportunity to debate and discuss ideas on a range of religious, philosophical and ethical themes. They are encouraged to think, question and reason for themselves, whilst developing an understanding of, and respecting, the beliefs of others.

The course does not require any religious belief, and students must be prepared to consider the ideas of others as well as their own. The topics covered and the skills required are useful across the curriculum; there are particular links to Geography, History, English, Biology and Business Studies.

SPECIFICATION

Students will study the AQA GCSE Religious Studies Specification A. They will study two religions in depth; Christianity and Islam, as well as a range of philosophical and ethical themes. The latter relate mainly to Christianity and Islam, but all other world religions will also be studied at various points of the course. Students will study two components during the GCSE course:

Component 1: The study of religions – beliefs, teachings and practices (Christianity and Islam).

In this unit students will study each of the religions' ideas on the nature of God, worship, key beliefs and practices including pilgrimage, festivals and celebrations. They will also study the role of the Church and Mosque in the local, national and international community, as well as the issues which religious believers face in today's world.

Component 2: Thematic studies.

In this unit students will explore a range of religious philosophical and ethical issues, including:

- The existence of God and revelation.
- Religion and life.
- Religion crime and punishment.
- Religion, peace and conflict.
- Religion, human rights and social justice.

THE EXAMINATION

Students will take two exams at the end of Year 11. Each exam is 1 hour 45 minutes in length. The first exam relates to the study of religions, and the second to the philosophical and ethical themes. There are two assessment objectives which students will be tested on; (i) knowledge and understanding, and (ii) analysis, evaluation, and application. There is no controlled assessment for Religious Studies. Revision sessions will be available to students focusing on exam technique and revision skills, as well as the content of each module.

BEYOND GCSE

GCSE RS will provide a number of very transferable skills which include the ability to analyse and evaluate a point of view, construct an argument, orally debate and defend a position. These are skills which are vital in a wide range of careers including law, politics, business management, finance, marketing, teaching, the civil service, and journalism. The ethical themes studied also make this an invaluable choice for students who are hoping to study medicine. In the multi-faith and multi-cultural world we live in, it is essential that students formulate an awareness, empathy, and respect for others, and GCSE RS will help them to do this. The GCSE RS course also prepares students very well for A-level RS, although it is also possible to study A-level RS without taking the GCSE course.